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N50-95

OCI NOTICE
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OPERATIONS
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To the Members of OCI

Today is OCI's twentieth birthday--a time for a look forward and a look back. Looking backward, we still have among us 31 charter members who can attest to the confusion and upheaval of the winter of 1950-51. They can also attest, I think, to the distance we have come in 20 years. Created almost as an afterthought from the fragments of a dismantled Office of Reports and Estimates, OCI has become a strong voice for the Agency. Our output is read, and our judgments sought, by the senior officers of government.

This did not happen just because in 1951 we were given a charter to produce "current intelligence." There were many false starts over the years, and much naivete, and no small portion of silliness. No one in 1951 had a clear idea of what current intelligence was, and only a few in the leadership of the original OCI had a concept of what it might become. OCI won its present standing by bringing that concept to reality; we did a job that needed to be done, and did it well. This, and not insistence on juridical authority, is the way to success in bureaucratic Washington.

It follows, of course, that the way to continued success is to keep on doing the job well. This means more than simply doing what we have been doing. It means recognition that the job itself has changed and will keep on changing. We made our reputation by innovation, flexibility, willingness to experiment, sensitivity to the requirements of our customers, and above all enthusiasm for the task in hand. Change will be on us in the next decade: new collection systems will bring new data; the computer age will emerge from its infancy; the possibilities for new mischief abroad are infinite; new faces will appear among policy-makers in town. If we can tackle such challenges with as much creativity and enthusiasm in our second 20 years as we have in our first, we should give our masters little cause for complaint. (They will, nonetheless, complain, but that is in the nature of masters.)


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Enough self-congratulation, however. Let us make a few resolutions for the next decade:

- 1) We shall not be surprised by anything, no matter how surprising; we shall never miss a coup.
- 2) We shall cheerfully meet all NIS deadlines; Section 9 shall be to Section 5 as the lips and the teeth.
- 3) We shall not sneer at technology, or the technical-minded.
- 4) We shall speak our piece, most of the time, in reasonably respectable English prose.
- 5) We shall not say step up when we mean increase, beef up when we mean strengthen, gear up when we mean prepare; we shall avoid all those words limp from overuse: confrontation, escalation, hard line (which is indeed two words), deploy, presence, plagued by, facade of unity; nothing shall ever be evidenced by; all pronouns shall have antecedents.
- 6) We shall write even on those subjects on which there is no information.
- 7) Editor, production officer, branch chief, and analyst shall lie down together like lambs and wolves, in any appropriate proportion.

Having achieved all this, let us keep our approach professional, our judgment sound, and our presentation literate, now and 20 years hence. Thank you all, and especially the gallant 31 who have lasted the course.

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RICHARD LEHMAN
Director of Current Intelligence

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